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DDR 2964

15 February 1965

NOTE FOR DDTR AND DTR

SUBJECT: VLTP

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1. As a follow-up to the DDTR's comment on the routing slip of the attached memoranda, [REDACTED] and I met briefly and have these further comments to offer about the VLTP:

a. The time factor is such that it is doubtful that any changes in the VLTP to become effective this next semester (22 March to 6 August) could be made gracefully or without upsetting the plans of several individuals. Roy is at a point where he must begin lining up his instructors and ordering texts for the courses. It is doubtful, therefore, that any changes could be made at this late date without incurring criticism from many Agency components. It would seem that a better time to make any changes would be after the completion of the basic study on the VLTP. This would provide opportunity for checking out and coordinating any changes that you may desire.

b. When the Language School first submitted its recommendations for suspension of the VLTP, they were largely motivated by what they believed to be a critical need to save funds. Roy explained that he had originally proposed the curtailment as a measure not for effecting an absolute savings but rather as a means of finding money which he needed in the regular day time training program. We have since explained to him that OTR is not in such a critical need of funds that in our opinion it should become a determining factor in this case.

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c. If you should agree that the VLTP should continue unchanged until after the basic study and if you further agree*, Roy plans at the beginning of this next semester to adopt the reduced overtime payments for instructors' salaries as proposed in paragraph 2 of [REDACTED] memorandum, i.e., one hour of overtime pay (\$5.21) to be paid for each hour taught instead of the present 1 1/2 hours overtime pay (\$7.81) for each hour of instruction.

*that changes should be made in the computation of overtime,

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d. Further, if you agree that no change should be made in the VLTP until after the basic study, Roy will insure that the program meantime will be administered in such a manner as to make certain that no funds will be expended except as absolutely necessary to cover those enrolled in the program. In other words, he plans to police the administration of the program very carefully and to consolidate classes whenever possible.

2. Should you care to discuss the matter further, Roy will be available any time after 11:30 Tuesday morning, 16 February. He will already be in the building to talk to the Training Officers Orientation Class from 10:45 to 11:30. If convenient for you, immediately after the lecture would be the best for him. I will be down [REDACTED] Tuesday with [REDACTED] will be here and can be available at any time. If Tuesday is not agreeable, I shall be glad to work out a suitable time with [REDACTED]

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4 February 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Training

SUBJECT : The Voluntary Language Training Program

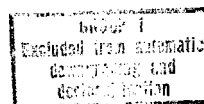
REFERENCE : Memo from Coordinator, VLTP,
dated 2 February 1965

1. In the attached memorandum, the Language School indicates that it plans to make a thorough study of the VLTP. Meantime, they recommend that classes in the VLTP be suspended at the close of the current semester on 19 February. They suggest, however, that classes having at least 5 students be continued, or that 6 classes with an overall enrollment of 34-37 students be continued.

2. Re para 1. As of 15 January 1965 there were 106 students enrolled in the Program. Thus, when we subtract the number of students provided for in the above 6 classes we have a balance of 60 to 70 students for whom we would have no program. Of that number, the Language School estimates that from 15 to 20 probably would have continued their studies but since no new students can be taken in the above six classes there would be no training for them. In addition, the Language School estimates that they would probably receive an additional 125 students for the next semester (22 March-6 August, the Registrar has received 42 applications thus far.). Of these about 100 would be beginners and 65 to 75% of them would be in classes in the romance languages, where the dropout has been the highest. They estimate that the remaining 25 students would have enrolled at higher levels. Based on current and recent dropout figures, only about 60 of the 125 new students would normally continue with the Program. Thus, if the recommendation to suspend the program were approved, 75 to 80 students (the 60 above plus 15 to 20 from current classes) would lose out on this language training. If the program were to be suspended completely (including the above 6 classes), the figure would be about 110 to 115.

3. Re para 2. The recommendation that overtime pay for instructors be reduced -- to one hour overtime pay for each hour taught instead of the present 1 1/2 hours of overtime for each hour of instruction -- should in my opinion be approved. It seems to be a

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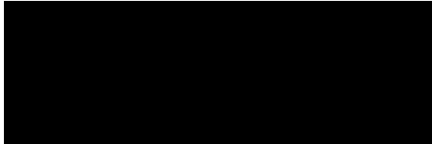


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sound change whether you approve the suspension as recommended or decide that the program should be continued unchanged. For example, GS-9's and above are paid \$5.21 for each hour of overtime instruction. In other words, a 20-week course of 100 hours of instruction now costs \$781.50 in overtime payment. The same course under the recommended change would cost \$521.00.

4. Re para 3 a. and b. During the current semester which began on 21 September 1964, the program had a beginning enrollment of 198 students. By 15 January 1965, this enrollment had dropped to 106 (or 49% as stated in the memorandum). The dropouts have continued since the 15th of January to a point where the percentage is now approximately 55%.

5. Presumably, the detailed study can be made just as well if the VLTP is continued unchanged. It neither depends upon nor necessarily relates to the recommended suspension of classes. The main consideration, therefore, underlying the recommended suspension is the saving of \$13,500 or \$16,500 if all classes are suspended. To look at it another way, it will cost \$3,000 to continue the 6 classes (34 - 37 students) (while suspending the remainder of the program) and \$13,500 to provide instruction for the additional 75-80 students (if the program continues unchanged). Nevertheless, despite the saving of funds, it seems to me that it may be better to continue the program without change until after the detailed study has been completed.


Chief, Plans and Policy Staff

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Memorandum

TO : Chief, Language Training School
THRU : Chief, Special Projects/LTS

DATE: 2 February 1965

FROM : Coordinator, VLTP

SUBJECT: Recommendation of Suspension of the Voluntary Language Training Program

1. After reviewing present and recent trends and developments within the Voluntary Language Training Program (VLTP), we recommend that classes in the VLTP be suspended at the end of the semester with the following exception. We suggest that students now in their first or second semester who wish to complete their basic training cycle should be permitted to do so, provided a minimum of five students register for each class. However, no new students will be taken into these classes, which thus would phase out this coming July, and, the last ones, if any, in March 1966.

2. During the period of suspension we would re-examine the VLTP in terms of cost and efficiency as well as results, and its role in the overall LTS training effort. We would attempt to evaluate what real useful impact the VLTP has had in raising overall language proficiency and if we have been training people who have actually needed the language on the job or in future assignments. The cost saving effected in the remainder of FY 65 by such suspension would be \$13,500 and \$16,500 if no classes were given at all. If this suggestion is approved we furthermore recommend that the overtime pay for instructors be reduced to one hour of overtime pay for each hour taught instead of the present 1 1/2 hours of overtime for each hour of instruction.

3. Besides offering a very much needed chance to re-examine the entire program, the following developments have strongly influenced our recommendation to suspend the program.

a. Student dropout rates have increased steadily over the years. Whereas the dropout rates in 1959 and 1960 were between 30-35%, these now are hovering in the vicinity of 50%. The semester ending February 1964 showed a 49% dropout rate. The semester which ended in July 1964 showed a 50% dropout rate. The current semester shows that 49% of those who began, dropped out at the end of 15 weeks, i.e., 5 weeks before the official end of the semester. No classes had to

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be discontinued in the semester ending February 1964 because of low enrollment or dropout rates. However, two classes were discontinued before the end of the past semester, and three classes have already been discontinued this current semester and two others may have to be before the semester ends.

b. The number of classes is steadily dwindling from the 27 beginning in September 1963; 22 beginning a year later.

c. Enrollment in continuing phases of the basic course has gone down even more sharply. Figures in French and Spanish highlight this trend: 63 students enrolled in French in March 1964; of these, 29 finished. Of the original 63, 15 enrolled in the next phase in September 1964.

Fifty students enrolled in Spanish in March 1964, 22 finished; of these, 11 enrolled again in September 1964. Of the original 50 students, only 6 are still in class. The most startling single fact at present is that of the 42 students who began Spanish 101 in September, only 12 are still attending class; and of these 12, 4 are doing barely satisfactory work.

4. As we have observed over the eight year period of the VLTP many factors have contributed to a high dropout rate. Chief among these have been: low language aptitude, poor attendance in class and/or language laboratory, personal reasons such as illness, domestic problems, etc., PCS abroad, too frequent TDY's, overtime required in offices, and "other training". Since the Fall of 1963, the last three factors have shown a distinct upward trend. We have no firm evidence of the effect, if any, of the cancellation of the Language Awards Program on total registration or dropouts, but some part of the present situation must probably be attributed to that cause.

5. In those cases where out of hours training is absolutely necessary because of job requirements, LTS can easily handle those requirements with the same mechanism we use for out of hours tutorials. LTS can also assist any students anxious to continue their language studies and who wish to pay for the instruction themselves by locating competent instructors for them. We could coordinate any such cases and enable the students to get their instruction at reasonable rates.



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